



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE UPDATE

UPDATE ON SEWER MAIN BREAK IN RIO VISTA NEIGHBORHOOD

December 18, 2019, 10:30 a.m.

The City of Fort Lauderdale conducted a media briefing on site at 10:30 a.m. this morning to provide an update on the 54-inch sewer main repair, located on Ponce de Leon Drive between SE 9 Avenue and SE 12 Way in the Rio Vista neighborhood.

Below is a recap of comments from Mayor Dean J. Trantalis:

I would like to share some good news with everyone about the 54-inch sewer main repair.

During the overnight hours, crews from David Mancini & Sons working in partnership with City Public Works staff were able to successfully install a line stop on each side of the damaged portion of the pipe along with a 36-inch bypass line.

At approximately 3:04 a.m. this morning, the line stops were activated, the valves on the bypass line were opened, and the sewage flow was diverted around the damaged section of pipe and into the bypass pipe.

The bypass line is functioning properly, the wastewater collection system is back online, and sewage is no longer spilling from the pipe or reaching the Tarpon River.

Tanker and vac truck operations have been discontinued and pumps and diversion lines have been demobilized.

With the system stabilized, work has already begun on repairs to the damaged portion of the 54-inch pipe. Crews are digging an access pit around the pipe so it can be cut out, removed, and replaced with a new section. We expect this repair to be completed by Saturday morning.

While the pipe replacement moves forward, cleanup activities and site remediation work will continue. Some of the construction equipment will begin being removed from the site.

Our environmental contractor, Cliff Berry, Inc., (CBI) has been on site since last Wednesday and will continue to clean and sanitize the affected area. They are disinfecting and pressure washing public roads, sidewalks, swale areas, and driveways of impacted properties. They have also deployed mitigation techniques to minimize odor concerns.

The current plan is to address the affected homeowner properties first and then remediate Hector Park, which will be used as a staging area for CBI's remediation activities. CBI will remain in the area until we are satisfied that restoration of the site is complete.

While the overflow did not enter into homes, we are aware that it did run onto several properties. Neighbors who have incurred expenses or suffered damage related to the sewage overflow can make a claim by calling the City's Risk Management Division at 954-828-5177.

Operations to help restore the Tarpon River remain ongoing. Ten aerators are operating 24/7 in various points in the Tarpon River and the New River to help improve water quality.

CBI has three boats patrolling the canal system in and around Rio Vista during daylight hours, beginning at 8 a.m. and operating until dark. They will continue monitoring waterways and conducting skimming and debris removal as part of our cleanup efforts until the remediation is complete.

We also continue to work closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Their representatives toured the site yesterday and complimented our staff on the measures that have been implemented on site, and the contingency plans put in place as part of our response and remediation efforts.

In the meantime, it's important to remember that a precautionary advisory for recreational activities in the Tarpon River and parts of the New River remains in effect.

The boundaries for the advisory are Broward Boulevard to the north, Poinciana Drive to the east, SE 15 Street to the south, and SW 18 Avenue to the west. Water-related activities including swimming, fishing, jet-skiing, paddle-boarding, kayaking, and canoeing should be avoided within these boundaries. A map of the advisory area is available on our website at www.fortlauderdale.gov.

Let me also emphasize that this situation underscores the vital need for improved infrastructure. Since being elected, this City Commission has made infrastructure a number one priority. This has led to more responsible budgeting, as well as placing our spending focus on the real needs of our City.

Over the next five years alone, we will be investing a minimum of \$600 million in new sewer mains, water pipes, pump stations, storm drains, tidal valves, catch basins, and other projects to strengthen our infrastructure for the future.

Finally, let me thank all of our neighbors in Rio Vista. This situation has placed a huge inconvenience and heavy burden on them, particularly as they try to prepare for the holidays. The entire neighborhood has shown an incredible amount of patience and understanding as our crews have worked day and night to address this issue. I truly appreciate the exemplary way our neighbors have dealt with this difficult set of circumstances.

Again, our thanks to everyone here in Rio Vista. Please be assured that we will continue to work as quickly as possible until the pipe replacement and remediation of the area is complete.

Thank you.

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Links:

- To view a map of the precautionary advisory area, please visit <http://bit.ly/35l0DuC>.
- To view updates on the City's website, please visit <http://bit.ly/2rBJhLk>.
- To view photos of the operation, please visit <http://bit.ly/2tr4059>.